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Farm Broadcasters Letter

United States Department of Agriculture Office of Public Affairs Radio-TV Division Washington D.C. 20250 (202) 720-4330

Letter No. 2531

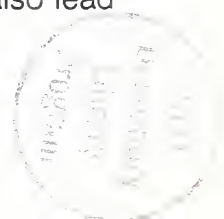
Nov. 8, 1991

CONSUMERS REAP WHAT AG SOWS -- Even though farmers get a lot of benefits from ag research, consumers get even more. Americans spend only about 12 percent of their budget on food, less than anyone else in the world. Just a few of the big economic & environmental payoffs from recent ag research: pesticide use on apples has been reduced by more than 50 percent in several experimental orchards in the Midwest; animals are being genetically improved to eliminate costly reproduction problems & to produce low-fat meat & milk; & ag research adds weight to our balance of trade. Some economists estimate that the typical family gets back \$3 for each \$1 invested in ag research. **Contact: Stan Cath** (301) 530-7122.

FOOD LABELING CHANGES -- The Bush Administration has proposed sweeping changes in food labels that will affect virtually all foods. In announcing this most extensive food labeling proposal ever, HHS Secretary **Louis W. Sullivan** & USDA Deputy Secretary **Ann M. Veneman** said the changes would enable consumers to select a healthier diet by providing accurate & reliable info about the nutritional content of the food they eat. The changes are expected to be fully implemented in 1993. **Contact: Roger Runningen** (202) 720-4623.

NEW APHIS ADMINISTRATOR -- Secretary of Agriculture **Edward Madigan** has named **Robert B. Melland** as administrator of USDA's Animal & Plant Health Inspection Service, the agency charged with protecting U.S. agriculture from foreign animal diseases & plant pests. The agency also administers laws governing humane treatment of certain animals, regulates veterinary biologics & carries out an animal damage control program. Melland has been acting administrator since Sept. 8 and was previously associate administrator. He has been with USDA since 1987. A native of North Dakota, he attended Jamestown College in Jamestown, N.D., & Concordia College in Moorhead, Minn. **Contact: John Duncan** (202) 720-2511.

SECRETS OF LIFE -- A blockbuster regional research project involving scientists from 12 states is making valuable use of ovaries of animals processed for meat. The ovaries, usually discarded or put into pet food, can now be used to produce eggs & embryos for research. The project makes it possible for researchers to: use eggs that normally would degenerate; transfer desired genes from one animal to another; improve lab conception & embryo development & freeze genetic material. The research may also solve some human infertility problems and help preserve endangered species. In the future, this research may also lead to cows that produce low-lactose milk. **Contact: J. E. Butler** (208) 885-6345.



PLANT MULCH BEATS PLASTIC -- When USDA scientists used hairy vetch, a legume that forms a plant ground covering, as a mulch for tomatoes, they found it increased yields by about 138 percent & reduced insect infestation to the point where it was hardly a problem. "Plant mulches are the key to our success," says **Aref A. Abdul-Baki**. "We used hairy vetch instead of the traditional black polyethylene mulch in two separate tomato plantings this year. We got some amazing results." Unlike plastic, he says, plant mulches add organic matter to the soil & increase its water-holding capacity. Also, vetch is a legume that adds nitrogen, which reduces fertilizer needs. **Contact: Aref A. Abdul-Baki** (301) 344-1729.

TURKEY LOVERS CONTEST -- The **National Turkey Federation** is holding its third annual National Turkey Lovers' Recipe Contest for young chefs, ages 12 to 18. Contest entries will be accepted through April 1. Recipes must use at least one pound of fresh or fully-cooked turkey meat. **Contact: Chin Chu Moon** (703) 435-7209.

NEW COTTON VARIETY INCREASES FIBER QUALITY -- A new cotton variety with exotic genes from wild cottons could reduce pesticide use & increase profits for the nation's cotton farmers. The exotic genes transferred into the new variety are nectar-free. "Insect pests aren't attracted to a wild Hawaiian cotton species because it doesn't produce nectar," says **William R. Meredith, Jr.**, a USDA plant geneticist. **Contact: William R. Meredith, Jr.** (601) 686-5241.

DIETARY GUIDELINES IN SPANISH -- USDA has released the Spanish translation of **Nutrition and Your Health: Dietary Guidelines for Americans**. Like the English version, it was issued jointly by USDA & Health & Human Services. It is the federal government's principal statement of nutritional advice. "The **Dietary Guidelines** encourages the public to regard a good diet as the first line of defense against certain chronic diseases, as well as showing everyone how to maintain good health with a good diet so they can live a vigorous and productive life," says **Catherine Bertini**, USDA assistant secretary of agriculture for food & consumer services. "Publishing a Spanish translation of the guidelines will better help us get this message to the Hispanic population in the United States." **Contact: Johna Pierce** (301) 436-8617

JUST IN CASE you missed it, nearly all the phone numbers at USDA headquarters have changed. The old 447- prefix was replaced by 720-. USDA's Radio-TV number is (202) 720-4330; our **FAX** number is (202) 690-2165; and USDA **Ag NewsFAX** number changed to (202) 690-3944. Now if only we could remember them ...

<p><i>Editor: Marci Hilt Phone: (202) 720-6445 Fax: (202) 690-2165</i></p>
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FROM OUR RADIO SERVICE

AGRICULTURE USA #1796 -- A team of U.S. food & ag experts is back from a fact-finding trip to the Soviet Union. **Brenda Curtis** reports on what the team found. (Weekly reel -- 13-1/2 minute documentary.)

CONSUMER TIME #1278 -- A bird for a kinder, gentler age; lower turkey prices this season; cooking that turkey; new food labels on the way; protecting the safety of water supplies. (Weekly reel of 2-1/2 to 3 minute consumer features.)

AGRITAPE NEWS & FEATURES #1786 -- USDA News Highlights; a GATT update; a North American trade agreement update; managing pesticides. (Weekly reel of news features.)

NEWS FEATURE FIVE #1445 -- New research compound; spiced spuds don't sprout; truth about sprouts; preventing potato dry rot; low-cost natural compounds. (Weekly reel of research feature stories.)

UPCOMING ON USDA RADIO NEWSLINE -- **Scheduled reports for the radio newslines include, but are not limited to:** Tues., Nov. 12, U.S. crop production, world ag supply & demand; Wed., Nov. 13, crop/weather update, farm labor, world ag/grain situation, world cotton situation, world oilseed situation; Thurs., Nov. 14, livestock & poultry situation; Fri., Nov. 15, fruit/nut outlook, milk production; Mon., Nov. 18, catfish production; Tues., Nov. 19, wheat outlook, cattle on feed, crop/weather update. **Please don't let the lack of a story listing keep you from calling.**

DIAL THE USDA RADIO NEWSLINES (202) 488-8358 or 8359.

Material changed at 5 p.m., EST, each working day.

FROM OUR TELEVISION NEWS SERVICE

FEATURES -- **DeBoria Janifer** takes a look at school lunch on Capitol Hill; **Mike Thomas** reports on erosion blankets.

ACTUALITIES -- USDA meteorologist **Norton Strommen** on weather & crops; USDA economist **Janet Livezey** on U.S. rice production; USDA economist **Ron Gustafson** on livestock & poultry; USDA economist **Roger Hoskin** on oil crops.

UPCOMING FEATURES -- **DeBoria Janifer** reports on nutrition labeling; **Pat O'Leary** takes a look at high-value exports.

EVERY OTHER WEEK -- **Agriculture Update**, five minutes of USDA farm program information in "news desk" format with B-roll.

*Available on Satellite Galaxy 6, Transponder 12D (Channel 23), audio 6.2 or 6.8:
Thursdays from 7:30 - 7:45 p.m., EST, Saturdays from 10 - 10:45 a.m., EST, and Mondays from 8 - 8:45 a.m., EST.*

OFFMIKE

HEAVY ICING...in southern Minnesota dropped miles of electric cable, says **Roger Strom** (WCCO, Minneapolis). The National Guard has brought in portable generators. Many farmers are expected to be without power until the lines are repaired, which could take weeks in some areas. Dairy producers are milking & pumping water by hand. The 26-inch snow storm was followed by record cold temperatures. Most crops have been harvested and in the bins.

Q&A SESSION...via satellite TV between Kansas City and Moscow is planned for Nov. 14 at the NAFB banquet. Attendees in Kansas City will question **Victor Lishcenko** (head of food & agriculture, USSR Academy of Sciences) & leaders of the American Soybean Assn. meeting with him in Moscow. **Ray Wilkinson** (WRAL-TV) will anchor in Raleigh, N.C. **Ken Tanner** (Tobacco Network, Raleigh) says the program will be on Westar V, channel 4, 8:20-8:45 p.m., & will provide an opportunity for U.S. broadcasters & producers to learn about the Soviet soybean market & potential for sales.

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Office of Public Affairs
Radio-TV Division
U.S. Department of Agriculture
Washington, D.C. 20250-1300

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BROADCASTING LIVE...from annual meeting of COSDA, Communication Officers of State Departments of Agriculture, in Columbus, Ohio, was **Ed Johnson** (ABN Radio, Columbus). Among those interviewed were **Alice Walters** (COSDA president), **Bob Norton** (USDA Agricultural Research Service.) & **Stan Prochaska** (USDA Office of Public Affairs).

TOLL FREE...phone number of a Cornell University economic assistance program is being promoted by **Jeff Stewart** (Ag Radio Network, Utica, N.Y.). Cornell personnel are serving as brokers for those having excess forage to those who need it. Drought stricken sections of the state are in short supply of hay. Congratulations to Jeff. He's one of 30 people selected to attend monthly meetings of the Empire State Food & Agriculture Leadership Institute, a two-year program studying the food technology industry in New York.



VIC POWELL
Chief, Radio & TV Division